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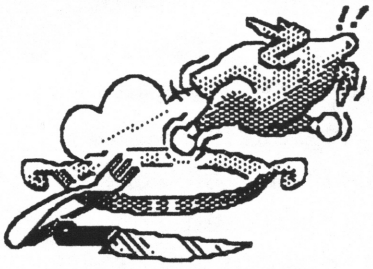

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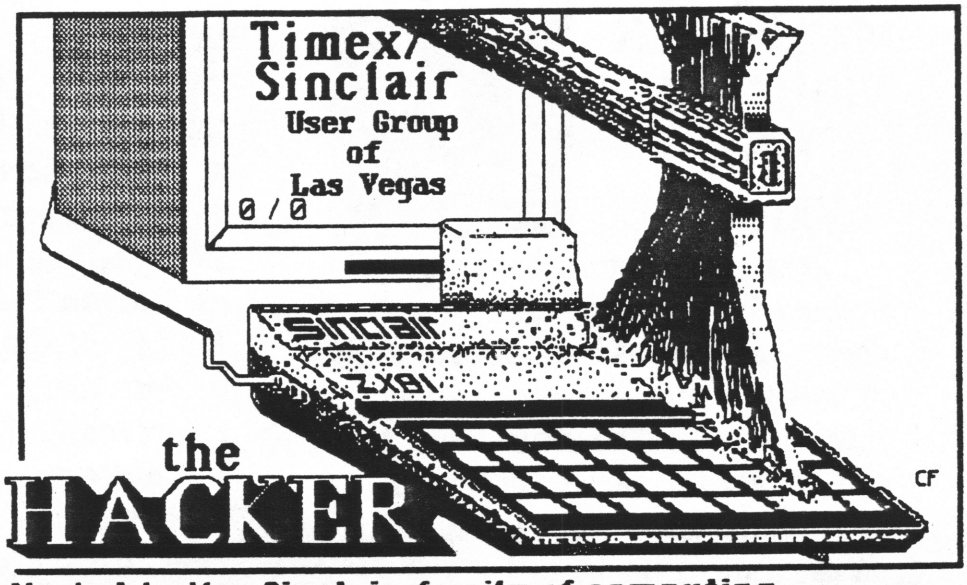

the HACKER

Newsletter dedicated to the Sinclair family of computing

"the HACKER" is an official publication of the Timex/Sinclair User Group of Las Vegas-a non profit, educational organization. Subscription to the "HACKER" is $15.00 per year (12 issues) and includes membership to TSUG of LV. Please remit to:

Ralph Hammer(treasurer)
2105 Oakwood Ave.
Las Vegas, NV 89030

MEMO

LET'S GET TOGETHER
Nov. 19,1989-----1-3 pm.
PC SIG----------3-4 pm.
the public is WELCOME

Meetings are held on the third Sunday of each month and include a light buffet lunch for members & guests. The meetings are held at:
2345 Moorpark Way,
Henderson, NV 89014

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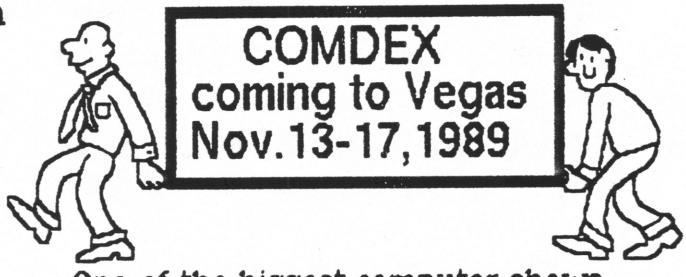


One of the biggest computer shows ever to hit the United States, is about to descend upon the Southwest desert. With over 1,700 domestic and international exhibitors to answer your questions and demonstrate new products, the five, full, fun packed days can boggle ones mind as to what is best and not best for their systems.

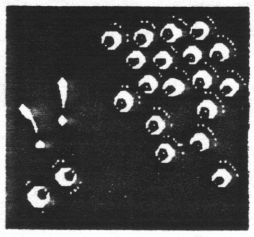
And also you can get a sneak-peak into the future of all the new toys for the computer minded enthusiasts as well as the tons of new programs and games for these newest inventions for keyboard minded wizards.

The projected attendence is expected to reach over 120,000 with exhibits at eight locations (talk about a traffic jam). This is one show I won't miss. See you there.....

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

It is better to slip with the foot than with the tongue.....

COMPUTER VIRUS SCAN NOW AVAILABLE



IBM has announced that it is making available a program that checks for viruses in PC's responding in part to customer worries about the rash of attacks. The virus scares have caused more panic within the PC world than Orson Wells did in 1938 on the radio.

News reports about the **Datacrime** virus, which will release its deadly virus after **Oct. 12th.** has caused widespread alarm even though experts say that it it rare and only a small amount of PC's will be hit and/or harmed.

IBM said its **IBM Virus Scanning Program** for computers that run Microsoft Corp.'s DOS based-layer software would spot three strains of the Datacrime virus as well as more common viruses that go by such names as the **Jerusalem, Lehigh, Bouncing Ball, Cascade and Brain**. The program is available for $35 directly from IBM or from dealers, marketing reps., and remarketers. The program will detect but **not** eradicate viruses. Some other say they have programs available, but they are not too reliable states IBM.

Art Gilbert, IBM's manager of secure systems industry support, states that " **installing a virus checker is not a substitute for safe-computing practices such as making back-up copies and being cautious about software of unkown origin.**"

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by.....John Sumpolec

As promised last month, here are the remaining six Bulletin Board Manners to better your BBS etiquette.

7. Don't go out of your way to make rude observations like ,Gee, this system is sure slow. Every BBS is a trade- off of features. You can safely assume that if someone is running a particular brand of software, that he is either happy with it or he'll decide to find another system he likes better. It does no one any good when you make rude comments about something that you perceive to be a flaw when it is running the way the SYSOP wants it to. A constructive criticism is somewhat more welcome. If you have an alternative method that seems to make good sense, then run it up the flagpole.

8. When leaving messages on systems which will allow private messages, stop and ask yourself whether it is really necessary to make it private. Unless there is some particular reason that everyone shouldn't know what you are saying, don't make it private. We don't call them PUBLIC bulletin boards for nothing. It is very irritating to other callers when there are huge blank spots in the message base that they can't read.

9. If your favorite BBS has a time limit, observe it. If it doesn't, set a time limit for yourself and abide by it instead. Don't tie up the system as a new user just so that you can download its list of other BBS. There is probably very little that is more annoying to any SYSOP than to have his board completely passed over by you on your way to another board.

10. Have the common courtesy to pay attention to what passes in front of your face. When a BBS displays your name and asks if this is you, don't say yes when you can see perfectly well that it is mispelled. Also, don't start asking questions about simple operation of a system untill you have thoroughly read all of the instructions that are available to you. I assure you that it isn't any fun to answer a question for the thousandth time when the answer is plainly displayed in the system bulletins or the system instruction section. Use some common sense when you ask your questions. The person who said "There's no such thing as a stupid question" has never run a BBS.

11. Don't be personally abusive. It doesn't matter whether you like a SYSOP or think he's a jerk. The fact remains that he has a large investment in making his system available, usually out of the goodness of his heart. If you don't like a SYSOP or his system, just remember that you can change the channel any time you want. Besides, whether you are aware of it or not, if you make

yourself enough of an annoyance to any SYSOP, he can take the time to trace you down and make your life, or that of you parents if you are a younger person, miserable.

12. Keep firmly in mind that you are a guest on any BBS you happen to call. Don't think of logging on as one of your basic human rights. Every person that has ever put a computer system online for the use of other people has spent a lot of time and money to do so. While he doesn't expect nonstop pats on the back, it seems reasonable that he should at least be able to expect fair treatment from his callers. This includes following any of the rules of the system he has laid out without grumping about it. Every SYSOP has his own idea of how he wants his system to run. It is really none of your business why he wants to run it the way he does. Your business is to either abide by what he says, or call some other BBS or start your own BBS.

****

I hope you enjoyed reading the general points of BBS etiquette as much as I did. If we all were to practice at least 75% of the 12, we would really keep all the SYSOP's happy. We will do our best.

Don't quote me as I may be wrong, but I think we have four PCUG members that have their own BBS'es on line. We have Doug Crowe with **RAIDERS,** James Theivagt with **TECH-ONE,** Theresa Heisserman with **WEEKEND HUDDLE** and our newest Allen Woolley with **FIFTH of FIRTH.** Last issue we gave Allen a plug with his new board. I hope you all have logged on to give it a try. Allen says that his ZOOM modem is still back ordered and may get it in a couple of weeks or so. Probably will have it hooked up by the time you read this. I guess some users have had a hard time getting on at 2400. I for one have to use 300 baud to get on so I havn't done much on it, as you know, 300 can be nerve racking when you are trying to upload or download. Hope it comes in soon.

This month, I will give Theresa a plug on her WEEKEND HUDDLE board. It is in operation 24 hours a day at 386-1984 and runs at 3/12/2400, but I think she says 2400 doesn't always connect. She has a nice Yellow Pages section for those who want to buy and sell. Be sure you check there first if you need something. I even have my CGA monitor and color card listed. Also she carrys a listing of upcoming computer Swap Meets in Southern Calif. Her and Keith are always going to them, so if you need something special, let her know and she will check it out for you. Keith got his VGA monitor and VGA card from one. The board supports only IBM programs as she checks them for VIRUS's. I don't blame her. As you know she lost a hard drive a while back. So give her board a try and get some good discussions going. She welcomes all good uploads.

Well, **DAWN SAWCHUK** finally got her 2400 baud modem she has always wanted, but she also got her dream machine, a 386 to run it. Boy, some people will do anything to get on a BBS. Joe from NELLIS

COMPUTERS fixed her up with a beautiful computer and VGA monitor plus all the extra frills. **OK Dawn, lets burn up some phone lines and keep those boards busy. Upload us some good programs.**

Carl Naugle gave me a nice article called **BITS,BAUD RATE,** and **BPS** which is a copyrighted article from The Boston Computer Society's **ONLINE CONNECTION** Newsletter. It is rather long and is a very informative article about Modems. I think the information would take the mystery out of Modem speeds. I even learned something when I read it. Call me at **457-0945** or catch me at a meeting.

Well, it is getting close to ALF time on TV, and ALF takes precidence over this keyboard so I will close this column for now. Have fun on the boards and remember to practice your etiquette at every session. Lets get some more participation. Till next month, keep the phones busy. BYE!!

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JOHN ANDERSON, POPULAR MAC EDITOR, DIES IN CALIFORNIA QUAKE

On **October 17**, minutes after leaving **Macromind**, a software company located on Townsend Street near Sixth in San Francisco, **John Anderson, known to his friends as "JJ,"** was killed by falling bricks from a building which collapsed during the earthquake. **Also killed was Derek Van Alstyne, assistant technical editor at MacUser magazine.**

Anderson, a veteran computer industry reporter previously with **Creative Computing** and **Computer Shopper,** was senior editor in electronic publishing at MacUser magazine at the time of his death at age 33.

Anderson, whose home was in **Boulder Creek, California,** leaves behind his wife and two small children and his parents in New Jersey.

Calls of sympathy have been coming into their Foster City, California MacUser offices from all over the country. Expressing the views of many of his friends at the magazine. "He had a fabulous computer mind, just a wonderful personality. He was liked by every person on this staff."

Ziff Communications is in the process of setting up a memorial fund for contributions to Anderson's family. A memorial service is being planned for Anderson on a beach somewhere, since he was always an avid fan of kites, and he "loved to go to the beach."

Derek van Alstyne, 22, assistant technical editor, was also killed in the earthquake. He is described as a young, brilliant computer person who was very enthusiastic about his job, and who came to the Bay Area from Colorado. No further information about his background was available at press time.

editors note: The "HACKER" wishes at this time to express their deepest sympathy to the families of John Anderson and Derek van Alstyne. Their computer reporting will be greatly missed by all.

NOW, HERE'S SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT !!!!!!!

The Oct. issue of the **Seattle Area Timex Users Group** newsletter (**S.W.Y.M.**) had a very well put article entitled **"What To Do With All Those TIMEXs?"**. In fact, I thought it being so good, I feel it should be read by all who at one time or another, had a **TIMEX/SINCLAIR**. Think about this as you read on.

As PC-compatable machines continue their price decline, some of us, apparently needing more complexity in their lives, are making the jump to the Land of Blue. Some of us have long-since done this.

Once the Smurf conversion is fully ingrained, the tendency is to ignore, maybe even deny, the humble beginnings from which we arose. Namely the Sinclair or Timex/Sinclair computers.

So you got yourself a 640K of RAM, an 80MB hard drive, a couple of 1.2MB floppy drives, an HP LaserJet printer, a Hayes 2400 baud modem and all the versions of DBASE and Wordstar you could ask for! How many inches of dust are you going to let settle onto your loyal T/S equipment, before they're used as planters? Before this nadir of neglect occures, please consider the following:

If you have children or grandchildren , give some thought to easing them into computer literacy with those old **1000's, 1500's** and **2068's**. You have the computers and the expertise to pull this off quite nicely. There are a lot worse things to pass on to the next generation.

For a more focused application, **think about turning that TS1000 into a dedicated controller of something**. How about a smart home monitor/burglar alarm? It doesn't take a whole lot of sophistication for it. Add an I/O board, a handful of sensors and a smidegeon of machine code and there you are! This could even be done on a 2K machine, without that wobbly RAM pack. Or, once your MC is perfected, perhaps even expanded past the 2K point, you may want to discard that RAM chip, as well as the 8K ROM and replace that with a EPROM of your program! Remember, this is now a dedicated CPU. It will do any one thing you want, faithfully.

The point is, that an unused computer is a terrible waste of resourses. You can keep on data basing, word processing and all those wonderful things on your IBM clone, if you want, but if you need or want a long-term function that would seriously tie up the PC, pull up the plants growing out of the dust on your TIMEXs and turn those machines into something useful. **If you need a doorstop, go buy a doorstop. Use the Timex for something else.**

AMSTRAD BLAMED FOR AUSTRALINA DEALER CRASH

The owner of South Australia's largest Amstrad dealership has blamed Amstrad for the collapse of his company.

Hans Kroonenburg of **Everything Computer** said that the high failure rate of Amstrad high-end PCs caused his company to go broke, and he would now have to sell his **Adelaide** home to pay off debts. "We had a failure rate of **90 percent**, with some machines **coming back five times**. The associated support-costs put us under," he said.

"Amstrad executives advised us they were going to recall all the 286s but nothing happened. They told me the machines were faulty four months ago," Kroonenburg said he was taking legal advice as to whether he has the right to sue Amstrad.

The Australian sales and marketing director of Amstrad, **Bordan Tkachuk,** said there were no grounds on which Kroonenburg could take legal action and said the business failure was just the beginning of many small company collapses due to a softening of the local PC market.

DATAbase SOFTWARE RELEASES NEW MINI-OFFICE VERSION FOR AMSTRAD

Database Software will release **Mini Office Professional,** an enhanced version of its phenomenally successful integrated software package for the PC, for the Amstrad PCW series, this week. The package will retail for UKP 39-95.

To date, Mini Office Professional has notched up sales of **50,000 units**. The package consists of five modules - word processor, spreadsheet, database, graphics and communications. The **Amstrad PCW version excludes the spell-checker and thesaurus** seen on Mini Office Professional Plus, the latest version of the PC package, but includes a **free book worth UKP 11-95, plus a rewritten user guide.**

The book - All in one business computing' by **John Hughes** - explains how to get the most out of Mini Office Professional. The spell-checker and thesaurus modules are available to Amstrad PCW users as an UKP 10 optional extra. "Mini Office is a time

proven package," said **Chris Payne, Database Software's marketing manager**. "And with the enhancements, particularly the book, it provides excellent value for money for PCW users," he added.

COMEDIAN THINKS Z88 NOT SO FUNNY

17 Oct 89 From: Teller To: All SEE ALSO #45 Subj: Hello

Hi, gang,

I am a new visitor. My name is Teller, and I am 1/2 the comedy/(magic?) team of Penn & Teller. I don't have a lot of problems with my new machine yet, but do have a couple of questions for any sages in the electronic world:

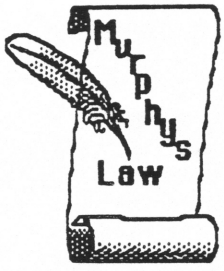
1. Is there a program for translating PipeDream to WordPerfect? (I like the fact that these are both program-names with capital letters in the middle of the words.)

2. I am in the New York City area. Are there other users nearby? And especially, are there Z88 dealers, repair people, etc. nearby?

3. I will be using my Z88 exclusively for words. I don't need all the spreadsheet functions. Is there any way to turn them off permanently? (I mean, so I don't have to turn them off every time I call up PipeDream)

cordially,

TELLER



Here are some more bits of wisdom from the collection of **Murphy speaks out on system laws & rules**. courtsy of the Las Vegas PC users group.

If the input editor has been designed to reject bad input, an ingenious idiot will discover a way to get bad data past it.

****

corollary: Contracts and warranties are void upon payment of invoice.

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If it jams, force it. If it breaks, it needed replacing anyway.

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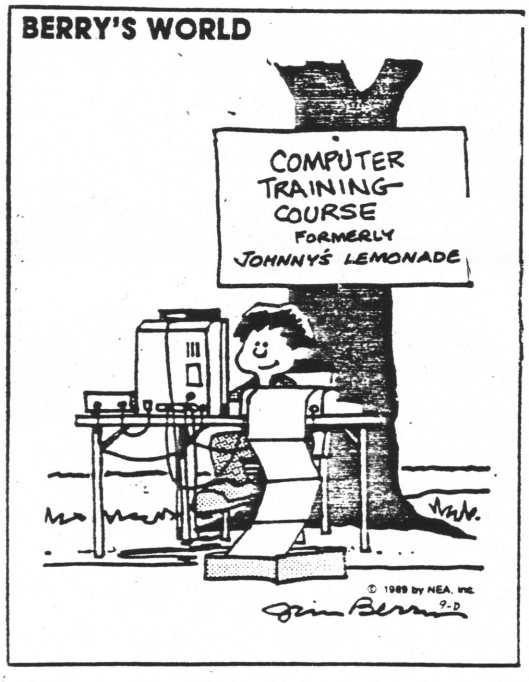
If there is an easier way, you won't see it.

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